REMARKS

Responsive to the Office action mailed August 23, 2010, which action was made final, applicant request entry of the foregoing amendments, consideration of the following remarks and reconsideration of the rejections set forth in said office action.

Claims 16, 29 and 34-36 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kambara et al. (US 5,922,912). Applicants submit that Kambara et al. '912 fails to render obvious the present invention as currently claimed.

The present invention is directed to the use of a metal alloy containing more than 40% of nickel and cobalt, 25% to 75% copper and not more than 2.5% iron. As shown in the tables of the present application these alloys and commonly known as Monel ®. The present invention is directed towards the use on Monel ® alloys in the construction of apparatus used for the manufacture, purification, handling and/or storage of ethylenically unsaturated monomers in the presence of an oxygen-containing gas. It was discovered that the use of such metal alloys, in the presence of the oxygen-containing gas, was effective in inhibiting polymerization of the monomer within the apparatus. The present invention does not require the addition of any copper to the system other than that provided by the presence of the copper contained in the Monel ® metal alloy in the system apparatus. The present inventors discovered that the use of Monel ® metal alloys effectively prevented undesirable polymerization within the equipment. Such metal alloys are easier to work with in industrially facilities than pure copper due to different properties such as weldability and strength.

Kambara et al. '912 discloses a method for the concentration of an aqueous acrylamide solution prepared by hydration of acrylonitrile or an aqueous acrylamide solution substantially free of acrylonitrile. The method makes use of a concentration apparatus, at least a part of whose solution-contacting section is made of a copper-containing material. . The concentration is conducted while introducing an oxygen-containing gas into the apparatus. Kambara et al. '912 discloses that the

apparatus is preferably made of a copper-containing material to an extent of 20% or more in terms of surface area. Examples of the copper-containing material include oxygen-free copper; phosphorus-deoxidized copper; and copper alloys such as beryllium copper, red brass and brass. The examples of Kambara et al. '912 discloses the use of copper-made Raschig rings, or where the separator inner wall was entirely made of copper (example 3). The examples of Kambara et al. '912 further disclose the addition of copper ions at a concentration of 5 ppm based on AAM or copper sulfate to the solutions being processed in the equipment. Thus, the teachings of Kambara et al. '012 are that copper ions must be incorporated into the solution being treated in the apparatus and that pure copper metal be used as a component in the apparatus in the concentration of aqueous acrylamide.

Applicants submit that Kambara et al. '912 fails to render obvious the present invention as currently claimed and that the rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing remarks, applicant respectfully submits that claims 16, 18-22, and 25, and 29-36 of the present application are in condition for allowance and prompt favorable action is solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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